NATIONAL FAST DAY
MARCH 30, 1863

DRAWER 5A

PROCLAMATIONS - MISCELLANEOUS

71.2009.085. 05864

National Fast Day Proclamation

Excerpts from newspapers and other sources

From the files of the

Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection

71.2009.085.05864

A Prayer That Was Answered

SIXTY years ago today, in response to the appeal of President Lincoln, Philadelphians, suspending their business activities, joined in prayer that victory might come to the Union Armies. The dark days of the Civil War were at hand and had furnished cause for the earlier issuance of the following proclamation, one of the most interesting in its devout utterance, that Lincoln put forth:

"Whereas the Senate of the United States, devoutly recognizing the supreme authority and just government of Almighty God in all the affairs of men and of nations, has by resolution requested the President to designate and set apart a day for national prayer and humiliation; and

"Whereas it is the duty of nations as well as of men to own their dependence upon the overruling power of God, to confess their sins and transgressions in humble sorrow, yet with assured hope that genuine repentance will lead to mercy and pardon, and to recognize the sublime truth, announced in the Holy Scriptures and proven by all history that those nations only are blessed whose God is the Lord;

"And, insomuch as we know that by His divine law nations, like individuals, are subjected to punishments and chastisements in this world, may we not justly fear that the awful calamity of civil war which now desolates the land may be but a punishment inflicted upon us for our presumptuous sins, to the needful end of our national reformation as a whole people? We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of Heaven; we have been preserved these many years in peace and prosperity; we have grown in numbers, wealth, and power as no other nation has ever grown. But we have forgotten God. We have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved us in peace and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us, and we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own. Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God that made us.

"It behooves us, then, to humble ourselves before the offended Power, to confess our national sins, and to pray for clemency and forgiveness.

"Now, therefore, in compliance with the request and fully concurring in the views of the Senate, I do by this, my proclamation, designate and set apart Thursday, the 30th day of April, 1863, as the day of national humiliation, fasting, and prayer. And I do hereby request all the people to abstain on that day from their ordinary secular pursuits, and to unite at their several places of public worship and their respective homes in keeping the day holy to the Lord and devoted to the humble discharge of the religious duties proper to that solemn occasion.

All this being done in sincerity and truth, let us then rest humbly in the hope authorized by the divine teachings that the united cry of the nation will be heard on high and answered with blessings no less than the pardon of our national sins and the restoration of our now divided and suffering country to its former happy condition of unity and peace."

Response to the President's proclamation was general in this city. All places of worship were open, business houses were closed and the streets notably deserted in an earnest and solemn demonstration, marking the prayer of the people answered a few weeks later at Gettysburg.

Zion's Herald

Wednesday *February* 6 1935

Lincoln's Fast-Day Proclamation

Issued from Washington, March 30, 1863

WHEREAS, the Senate of the United States, devoutly recognizing the supreme authority and just government of Almighty God in all the affairs of men and of nations, has by a resolution requested the President to designate and set apart a day for national prayer and humiliation:

And whereas, it is the duty of nations as well as of men to own their dependence upon the overruling power of God; to confess their sins and transgressions in humble sorrow, yet with assured hope that genuine repentance will lead to mercy and pardon; and to recognize the sublime truth, announced in the Holy Scriptures and proven by all history, that those nations only are blessed whose God is the Lord:

And insomuch as we know that by His divine law nations, like individuals, are subjected to punishments and chastisements in this world, may we not justly fear that the awful calamity of civil war which now desolates the land may be but a punishment inflicted upon us for our presumptuous sins, to the needful end of our national reformation as a whole people? We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of Heaven. We have been preserved, these many years, in peace and prosperity. We have grown in numbers, wealth, and power as no other nation has ever grown; but we have forgotten God. We have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved us in peace, and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us; and we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own. Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God that made us:

It behooves us, then, to humble ourselves before the offended Power, to confess our national sins, and to pray for clemency and forgiveness:

Now, therefore, in compliance with the request, and fully concurring in the views, of the Senate, I do by this my proclamation designate and set apart Thursday, the 30th day of April, 1863, as a day of national humiliation, fasting, and prayer. And I do hereby request all the people to abstain on that day from their ordinary secular pursuits, and to unite at their several places of public worship and their respective homes in keeping the day holy to the Lord, and devoted to the humble discharge of the religious duties proper to that solemn occasion. All this being done in sincerity and truth, let us then rest humbly in the hope authorized by the divine teachings, that the united cry of the nation will be heard on high, and answered with blessings no less than the pardon of our national sins, and the restoration of our now divided and suffering country to its former happy condition of unity and peace.

See page 123, "A Glorious Example"

United Nations Day of Prayer for Victory—Lincoln's Manifesto of 1863

EXTENSION OF REMARKS

OF

HON. MARTIN F. SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 30, 1942

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I desire to place in the RECORD a telegram which I recently received from the Great Commission Prayer League of Chicago. In 1863, during the darkest days of the Civil War, a period not unlike the present, Abraham Lincoln issued a manifesto designating a day of national prayer and repentance. He uttered words of wisdom which we would do well to heed. He set an example for the Nation which we would do well to emulate in these and the trying days to come. I also insert Lincoln's Manifesto of 1863.

CHICAGO, ILL., *July 10, 1942.*

In a recent wire to the President we quoted Abraham Lincoln's request for the supporting prayers of the people of God. His actual words were: "I go to a greater task than came to Washington, and I ask the prayers of God's people that I may succeed." A Biblical quotation apropos of this appeal is found in I Chronicles, chapter 5, verses 19 and 20. It says, "They cried to God in the battle and He was entreated of them, because they put their trust in Him." Will you not use your good influence to promote an Allied Nations' day of prayer?

GREAT COMMISSION PRAYER LEAGUE.

Abraham Lincoln's manifesto reads as follows:

Whereas the Senate of the United States, devoutly recognizing the supreme authority and just government of almighty God in all the affairs of men and nations, has by a resolution requested the President to designate and set apart a day of national prayer and humiliation, and whereas, it is the duty of nations as well as of men to own their dependence upon the ever-ruling power of God, to confess their sins and transgressions in humble sorrow, yet with assured hope that genuine repentance will lead to mercy and pardon, and to recognize the sublime truth announced in the Holy Scriptures and proven by all history "That those nations only are blessed whose God is the Lord."

And inasmuch as we know that by His Divine Law nations, like individuals, are subjected to punishments and chastisements in this world, may we not justly fear that the awful calamity of civil war which now desolates the land may be but a punishment inflicted upon us for our presumptuous sins to the needful end of our national reformation as a whole people.

We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of heaven; we have been preserved these many years in peace and prosperity; we have grown in number, wealth, and power as no other nation has ever grown. But we have forgotten God.

We have forgotten the gracious Hand which preserved us in peace and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us, and we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own.

Intoxicated with unbroken success we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God who made us. It behooves us, then, to humble ourselves before the offended Power, to confess our national sins, and to pray for clemency and forgiveness.

Now, therefore, in compliance with the request, and fully concurring in the views of the Senate, I do by this, my proclamation, designate and set apart Thursday, the 30th day of April 1863, as a day of national humiliation, to abstain on that day from their ordinary secular pursuits, and to unite in their several places of public worship and devote to the humble discharge of the religious duties proper to that solemn occasion. All this being done in sincerity and truth, let us then rest humbly in the hope authorized by the divine teachings, that the united cry of the Nation will be heard on high and answered with blessings no less that the pardon of our national sins and the restoration of our divided and suffering country to its former happy condition of unity and peace.

PRESIDENT LINCOLN'S EFFECTIVE PROCLAMATION

A PROCLAMATION FOR A DAY OF NATIONAL HUMILIATION, FASTING AND PRAYER

By His Excellency, Abraham Lincoln, President of the U.S.A.

Whereas, The Senate of the U. S.; devoutly recognizing the Supreme authority and just government of Almighty God in all the affairs of men and nations, has, by a resolution, requested the President to designate and set apart a day for National prayer and humiliation.

And whereas, it is the duty of nations, as well as of men, to own their dependence upon the overruling power of God, to confess their sins and transgressions, in humble sorrow, yet with assured hope that genuine repentance will lead to mercy and pardon, and to recognize the sublime truth announced in the Holy Scriptures and proven by all history that those nations only are blessed whose God is the Lord.

And inasmuch as we know that by His Divine law, nations, like individuals, are subjected to punishments in this world. May we not greatly fear that the awful calamity of the cruel war which now desolates the land, may be a punishment inflicted upon us for our presumptive sins, to the needful end of our National reformation as a whole people.

We have been the recipients of the choiciest bounties of heaven. We have been preserved these many years in peace and prosperity. We have grown in numbers, wealth and power as no other nation has ever grown.

BUT WE HAVE FORGOTTEN GOD!

We have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved us in peace, and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us. And have vainly imagined in the deceitfulness of our hearts that all these blessings were produced by some super wisdom and virtue of our own. Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God that made us!

It behooves us, then, to humble ourselves before the offended Power, to confess our national sins, and to pray for clemency and forgiveness.

Now, therefore, in compliance with the request, and fully concurring in the views of the Senate, I do, by this proclamation, designate and set apart Thursday, the 30th day of April, 1863, as a day of National Humiliation, Fasting and Prayer. And I do hereby request all the people to abstain on that day from all their ordinary, secular pursuits, and to unite in their several places of public worship and their respective homes, in keeping the day holy to the Lord and devoted to the discharge of the religious duties proper to that solemn occasion.

All this being done, in sincerity and truth, let us then rest humbly in hope, authorized by the Divine teachings, that the united cry of the nation will be heard on high, and answered with blessings, no less the pardon of our national sins, the restoration of our own divided and suffering country, to its former happy condition of unity and peace.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand, and caused the Seal of the U. S. to be affixed.

Done at the City of Washington the 30th day of March, in the year of our Lord 1863.

Signed by *Abraham Lincoln*, President of the U.S.A.

William H. Seward, Secretary of State

President Lincoln considered the Civil War as a Divine judgment visited upon the nation. Clear insight and logical conclusion based on reasoning of a high order mark his proclamation. It bears a prophetic stamp in its declaration of truth and values. He saw a direct connection between his perilous times and the pride and sin of his nation, and recommended the only remedy, national humiliation and prayer. **There was no other remedy then, there is no other remedy now.**

21 Dec 76

Dear Doctor Neely:

I am taking the liberty of sending you a report I wrote for some interested person on the inquiry of whose name appears in one of Al's proclamations. (I am embarrassed to confess I can't recall for whom I did the kit & record keeping. In fact I have a difficult time recalling anything about the three incidents except things.) Can recall the basement room in Greenbrier where the "person who did" calligraphy writing and the visit to Doctor Boston. It was quite emphatic in saying that the language was very definitely very certainly and unmistakenly Lincoln.

I was cleaning out my drawers trying to assemble data for US income tax data - I was surprised to find this - my handwritten report.

Apparently I sent the original to
Wayne Temple - who then was Editor
of Lincoln Herald. However in view of
the fact that I gave Temple 2
Complete in every detail including
Xerox Copies of Some Notes and
a tape recording (in one Case) of
a Conversation with a Smithsonian
Curator, photos Etc Etc -- One was
about 25 Years old the Second the
Lead Lining of Lincoln's Coffin - The
other was about the Henry life that
was Printed on Hard an Engraved
Presentation Life-statement to Lincoln
So far as I know perhaps Temple
may Have used one of the 3
stories I do not know the I Have
my doubts

Cordially; Best wishes Art Shelton

[redacted] NEELY July 1973

Dear Doctor

I make apologetically and with some diffidence my call Your attention to this matter. (Yet - there does come sometimes when an Editor needs always artistes, to fee ow a blank-space at the End of a page) so here goes:

A man whom I Know. Tho I do not Know him as a friend - (I dont Know him that well) asked me to do some reading and a bit of record-search-ing to determine these things about Lincolns 3-30-63 Proclamation", ? In whose actual Handwriting was it, were the words the thoughts the statements Lincolns, Seward's or ~~Sen~~ Senator J Harlan's; = Where is the Original Holograph draft.

~~Dr. Johnson~~ Each step of the way, as I uncovered Each answer, I wrote-up Each night what I Had found that day. I wondered if You'd like a Copy of my answers to the above Questions.

The next person (as referenced Coming up is a Colleague Fellow and one that it is more of less a part of the above Investigation & Can be Used as an independent "field."

Page II To Donald [redacted]

Part of my inquiry effort includes some research on Senator Harlan. That Part was the quickest and the most easily disposed of. However: I obtained from DC Municipal public Library a Biography of Sen James Harlan by Johnson Brigham. In it Brigham tells of Harlan's being on the floor of the Senate and a page-boy informed him on SAT 2 March 1861 the President-Elect Lincoln was in the "Presidents Room" adjacent to the Senate Chamber. Brigham mentions that Brigham then visited Lincoln and found Lincoln to be a most pleasant person. Also Harlan had never met Lincoln before. The Lincoln was slouched in ~~a~~ one the arm of the Chair, and the [redacted] what Lincoln had to say was that he wanted Harlans advice on "who to appoint to the Cabinet"!

Brigham tells of Harlan keeping + accumulating letters, clippings, Et Cetra of his Political Life + the Experiences and that Harlan had Planned to write his own auto-biog BUT HARLAN DIED

7-23-73

CONTINUED TO ADDITION Temple

PIII (his own Autobiog; Bur. Harlan dead) Harlan had a tremendous material ("papers") and He (Harlan) Had planned on making His data into a 2 Vol publication. After H died and the family took over, Harlan daughter married Robert Todd Lincoln. She & Mary Harlan-Lincoln inherited the Her fathers "papers" and they hired Johnson, Kay Bingham to do the writing. We no Know when Harlan's Original, Personal material is now, or if it was destroyed after Kinghams book was published. I intend to try to find out. very few people Know who Robert L. Beckwith Lives, (Kay, Ida). If I Can find out otherwise I'll drop him a note (He may not answer it)

The main Value of the 2 Hand Lincoln Harlan increased is because it is not mentioned in "Day By Day"! And because Harlan's daughter married RT Lincoln, And because the Rev Thomas gave Harlan Credit for being one of the gatherers-in-the-Evening friends and "Cronies" who had "bull sessions" in the white House. When I mentioned Jame Harlan to Jess Lamar he replied = "He's the guy who kicked Walt Whitman out of the Dept Interior" And he was

5. 4

(And the No was) supposed-to-be LINCOLN'S friend and Political ally HARLAN was a ring leader in the impeachment action against A Johnson after Lincoln's death.

I do several ways You might want to Consider the H & L 'story' one is "LINCOLN AND Harlan" Another is for us to get a letter of inquiry asking the three questions about the 3-30-63 Proclamation and in the next issue 'Lincoln Heroes' publish the answers. And the 3rd is: merely use the 2 March 61 meeting between L + H especially as it is not in Day by Day.

The Senate was in session 2 March 1861 the the Congressional Globe does not show any Vote-action or any debate-speech by Harlan. He does appear on Pages 2 & and a few days later also (BUT) not Every Senator appears up Every day. So H could easily (and very Certainly) have been in the Senate that day.

what do You think of all this? (You do as much Editing as You may wish)

19 July 1973 3rd report on Lincoln's 3-30-63 "Proc."

On Thursday, at Library of Congress, I entered the Stacks where are kept the old "Congressional Globe" vols and took down the March 1863 Vol.

It has on pages 1448 + 1501 references to Senator Jas Harlan's resolution urging President L. to issue a "Proc" designating "a day of Prayer and fasting." Harlan's proposition was accepted by the Senate. Votes on, and it Passed. He offered it 2 March, and on 3 March it Passed.

The wording of Harlan's Res makes it quite obvious that it is Entirely a different writing -- it is not Lincoln's 3-30 Proclamation. There has been some slight suggestion that the "Proc" Lincoln signed might have originated in Congress, sent from Congress to the Printer, and from the Printer to the White House, and that A.L. merely signed a Proc which was already written -- by some other Person -- NOT-SO!

Doctor Kinsler's firm Suspects that the 3-30 Proc was in Lincoln's own language, his thoughts, his philosophy is borne out by comparing Harlan's writing with Lincoln's.

Incidentally, Harlan was an Exp. well known influential Methodist layman. (when I mentioned "Harlan" to Geo Landes; he said Yes the Guy who kicked Walt Whitman out of the Interior Dept - after Leaves of Grass"

P2

From Library of Congress I went to NAT Archives, then I was shown: Harlan's original handwritten draft of his March2-March3 Ks' Opn I had a Xerox made of it.

Then- next- I called on Virginia Purdy in Room G15 (at Archives) - She has - at present - Custody of the Large Handsome (appx 14 x 16) Vol bound in glamorous red. Containing a substantial number of Lincoln's Proclamations, and she opened the Vol at the 3-30-63 Proc.

It's handwritten - But, NOT in Lincoln's handwriting.

It is written in a beautiful, formal and elegantly professional penmanship. All of them (in the same Vol) are by the same professional Engrossing Copyist

She Pronounces "ik-LIGG-zophir"

If any one wants to Purchase a Copy - it's 4 Pages - the Cost is $5,00.

It IS signed by Lincoln.

Send Check to Cashier, NAT Archives, DC 20408, Mark Check to: "NATF/NE Educational Program."

P.3

I have ascertained that the DC public Library at 9th + G in their Biog Div. has a Copy of (illegible) Johnson Brigham's Biography of James Harlan. I Expect to Examine it on Saturday 21 July. I also plan on visiting Library of Congress to look at "Washington Chronicle" for April 18 1863 to see what it has to say about the 3-30 Proclamation (I do not Expect too much in Either place. However a record search does (should) leave any stone unturned.)

I shall take the liberty of sending you a Xerox of Harlan's "Res," both in the Printed, Congress Globe Version and, in its original handwritten 1st draft form.

The enclosed snapshot are with my Compliments

Best Sheldon

Just one more report wise, I think. finish this PS inquiry.

3 3

(This is Part #2 of my report on Lincoln and his Several Proc-
-lamations)

It matters NOT (really) that the 5 Previously mentioned
Proclamations -- in some manner or another, they came
to Lincoln's attention -- adamantly and certainly
they were not LINCOLN Proclamations.

Even tho - perhaps - Congress had written a Proclamation
and -that when it came to the White House it
was Printed -- if Lincoln signed it it then
Automatically (and arbitrarily) became a "Presidential
Proclamation - (Provided of course that it was
sent to Lincoln for him to sign)

Even tho some clerk - a Secretary - took down LINCOLN'S
dictation -- That the first (and) hand-written draft was
written - (By hand of Count the document for Lincoln,
for his signature; if Lincoln signed it it
then became a Presidential Proclamation

None of those other five went through this Channel

Even tho Lincoln may have had a very genuine, heart-felt
Sympathy, respect, and a feeling of Encouragement for Each
(and in fact, all 5) -- They certainly do not come within
the scope or the meaning of being "Presidential Proclamations"

These are those "Other-5" that they were listed in the index papers "Day by Day"
were NOT Presidential Proclamations.

Thurs 19 July 1973;

Today I called on Doctor Roy Basler in his office as Executive director of MSS. Div. of Library of Congress. Briefly this is in effect what he said;

That he is enormously certain that NOT one of any hand written original draft of any of Lincoln's Proclamation has ever turned up. Printed copies are available. But, there was no typewriters in 1863. The original hand written drafts that went to the printer may have been written by any one of several clerks or Secretaries employed in the White House. Nobody knows whose handwriting. whose penmanship wrote out any (and/or all) of those Proclamations.

(if we had access to any one of the originals, then; it would be as easy as pie to identify; especially Lincoln's hand writing. But we don't have. it is still likely we ever shall)

Doctor Basler is firm as sincere and Emphatic that the words, the thoughts, the spirit of the Proclamation was composed (dictated perhaps) by Lincoln. Doctor Basler is Completely Convinced that Lincoln's style, his Legal mind, his (~~[illegible]~~ poetic use of Elizabethan English, are un-unmistakable.

Read aloud Lincoln's Second Inaugural, 1st & 4th Letter. Gettysburg Address. Go then CW Volumes select any of Lincolns letters, orders, Stat Papers and then Come back to the 30 March 63 proclamation. It has a ring to it that is Lincolns own manner.

I Have an appt for Thurs afternoon with Mr SWEENEY ("SWEE-NEE") in one div of archive and with Mr Brown in another section of Archives.

Mr Carter + "SWEENEY" are archivists who should be able to throw some light on the Proclamation.

Mr Brown + Miss Wallace are reported to be somewhat Expert on Senate Resolutions.

The original ~~Resolution~~ in US Senate (March 2 63) was offered by the Senator from Iowa, James Harlan. The "Res" was adopted, 3 March 1863. Lincoln signed it 30 March 1563. The day "set aside" + designated was 30 April 63.

James Harlan to had been president of Iowa Wesley University, Mount Pleasant Iowa. He was a US Senator 1855. He was out 57-to61 - and back in again 61-65 when he became Sec of Dept Interior from may65 to July66 when he was again re Elected to US Senate 67-73. He was a delegat to th Peace Convention in Washington Fri's 4-27 1861 delegates from 21 States assembled the resolutions and recommendations were ~~was~~ NEITHER acted on ~~nor~~ approved by US' Congress 2 March, 1882-1885 Harlan was presiding Judge The 'Court of Commissioners' authorized to try the Case of CSS "Alabama" Claims. The "Alabama" ~~was~~ Built in England, ~~&~~ destroyed Many-Many US privately-owned Merchant-Ships. The Commission awarded US $15,000,000 damages.

I believe it was Harlan's daughter who married RT Lincoln

Harlan was one of those friendly cronie who ~~ofter~~ often assembled at the White House in the Evenings., during ther meeting Lincoln was relaxed, friendly, and a superb story teller. Here he was "one more the Lincoln of the 8th Indiana Circuit".

December 28, 1976

Mr. Bert Sheldon
Apt. 302
3315 Wisconsin Ave N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20016

Dear Mr. Sheldon:

I am acknowledging your letter of December 21, 1976 as Dr. Neely is out of the office until the first part of January.

Your letter will be brought to Dr. Neely's attention upon his return.

Sincerely yours,

(Mrs.) Mary Jane Hubler
Assistant to Dr. Neely

MJH/cks

January 13, 1977

Mr. Bert Sheldon
Apt. 302
3315 Wisconsin Ave N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20016

Dear Mr. Sheldon:

I have just read your research report on the March 30, 1863 Lincoln proclamation. It is interesting, and there is a lot of interest in whether Lincoln cared enough to write these himself. The most famous one, in fact, was certainly written by Seward; this one, I'll say in Mr. Basler's favor, does sound like Lincoln.

I have also opened another recent package of clippings and magazine articles.

Thanks a lot for keeping us in mind.

Sincerely,

Mark E. Neely, Jr.

MEN/cks